

Testimony

Leslie A. Hotaling, Acting Director

Department of Public Works

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Fiscal Year 2002 Budget Hearing

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Good morning Madam Chairperson, members of the Council and staff, I am Leslie Hotaling, Acting Director of the Department of Public Works. I will be providing testimony today on DPW's FY 2002 Clean City budget, after which Dan Tangherlini will offer his testimony on DPW's 2002 budget for transportation. We are joined by Pamela Graham, Chief Financial Officer for the Department.

DPW Organization And Mission

The Department of Public Works provides the basic services that residents expect from their local government. "Basic" doesn't mean ordinary or stripped down. It means crucial, fundamental, and vital. Neighborhood by neighborhood, DPW touches the lives of every DC resident. We are working 24/7 to keep our city clean, safe and attractive, through exceptional solid waste management, parking enforcement, fleet management and snow removal.

Our programs reflect the vision put forward by Mayor Williams in his strategic initiatives aimed at Building and Sustaining Healthy Neighborhoods and Making Government Work for everyone. For DPW, "the basics" means that the

Department has the funding it needs to run its current core programs. Operationally, back-to-basics means that we will focus on delivering neighborhood-based, on-time, scheduled services to our residents

FY2002

At the February 21, 2001 oversight hearing I presented you with a look backward at where we've recently **been** with respect to our FY2000 budget and I gave you my assessment of where we **are** now with regard to our FY 2001 budget. Today, I would like to talk about where we **plan to go** during FY2002.

The proposed FY 2002 operating budget for DPW is \$120,116,499. It includes \$97,792,933 from local funds, which supports 1,069 FTEs, and \$22,323,566 from other sources, which supports 121 FTEs. The proposed capital budget is \$59,467,000 -- \$50.2 million for 16 ongoing projects and \$9.267 million for two new projects, including a major purchase for facility relocation.

While it appears at first glance that the Mayor's proposed department budget is 6.4 percent below the approved level for FY 2001, in fact the local funds have increased by \$3.2 million, or 3.4 percent. The additional funds will go to the increased costs for energy, custodial and security services, and debt service on new equipment. What appears to be a reduction in Other Funds and Intra-District Funds is actually a transfer of funds and FTEs, a total of 361, to the capital budget for the Transportation Division.

Additionally, in FY 2001 the department received authority to account for 220 positions that are funded out of the capital budget. In FY 2002 we are accounting for capital positions separately, so those FTEs are not part of the

operating request for FY 2002. For the first time the capital and operating positions will be accounted for in the appropriate place. The only reductions in FTEs are 36 for the “\$52 million in targeted savings” and four as part of the \$1,000,000 efficiency initiative.

I believe that the funding in this budget plus many of the operational improvements made possible by the Mayor and this Council in the current fiscal year, will put this department in a position next year to deliver a high return on your investment.

Solid Waste Management Administration

Trash Collection

One of our most visible services is residential trash collection. DPW collects trash from all homes with 4 or fewer dwelling units. In FY2002, we anticipate on-time, service delivery – that is, trash collected on its scheduled day to be accomplished 98 percent of the time with minimal overtime costs. This will be achieved largely due to the purchase of new state-of-the-industry, high-compaction trash trucks. Thirty-five of these trucks will be fully operational by April 2001. By year end, we will have a total of 55 new trash trucks, effectively replacing the city’s entire trash collection fleet. The improved performance and reliability of these vehicles will result in a dramatic decrease in overtime spending.

With new equipment comes new flexibility - and accountability. Foremen, who used to spend hours in the yard juggling drivers and trucks to cover the day’s

routes, can now be on the streets, inspecting those routes for service and cleanliness.

Some of you also may have noticed that the new Supercans have arrived. Delivery started March 1, beginning in the east and moving west, and we anticipate completing this delivery in mid-July. With each new Supercan, we are also distributing a newly developed, two-color public education brochure, to better educate our customers about proper trash and recycling procedures.

Bulk Collection

I am again pleased to report that the bulk collection program continues to be our most popular service, as well as our most reliable. When a residential customer has bulk materials to remove, they need simply to call the Mayor's Call Center at 727-1000 to schedule an appointment, for a specific day. And we have met those appointments 100 percent of the time. In addition, 96 percent of appointments are made within 10 days of the service request, far exceeding our target of 80 percent. In FY 2002 we plan to deploy 10 new lift-gate trucks, which should expand the number of appointments we can schedule each day from between 100 and 150 to between 150 and 175.

Recycling

Our recycling program is due for a growth spurt. DPW's one-man recycling office has been hard pressed to inspect and evaluate the work of the city's recycling contractor. In FY2002, we have funding to sustain a recycling contract monitor, as well as two recycling educators, who will enhance our school program and will work to start a commercial recycling effort.

New public education brochures have been produced in English and Spanish detailing how residential curbside recycling should be sorted, packaged and set out. Distribution by mail and via community meetings has already begun. We are also working to implement the programs authorized by the Council in this fiscal year, including government buildings recycling, commercial outreach and public education. With continued funding for these positions in FY'02 and expansion of the recycling program to other sectors of the city, we anticipate that our recycling rate will begin to approach that of our neighboring jurisdictions.

Street and Alley Cleaning

The Street and Alley Cleaning Division provides services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During the day, we are sweeping and cleaning residential neighborhoods and high visibility commercial areas like Adams Morgan, Anacostia and Capitol Hill. At night, we are collecting trash from the city's nearly 3000 sidewalk litter cans and sweeping the downtown core. An additional 432 litter cans are programmed to be installed in FY2002.

Many of us remember the days when men (and women) with brooms and push-carts manually cleaned the commercial streets of Washington. A few years ago, we had 25 of these manual routes. With the introduction of mechanized cleaning equipment we have been able to consolidate those routes, reducing the number to 20 – all except three now mechanized. A two-mile route that used to be covered by one person with a broom, rake and shovel can now be expanded up to eight miles per day with the litter vac.

The ultimate performance measure of the work of the Street & Alley Cleaning Division is the “cleanliness ratings” developed by Vincent Spaulding, the Mayor’s Clean City Coordinator. This data is collected quarterly and helps us identify our problem areas, and therefore, realign our resources to meet the changing needs throughout the city. Our goal is to achieve an overall cleanliness rating of “clean” or “moderately clean” on 80% of the District’s gateways, and commercial and residential streets. By the 2nd Quarter of FY2001, DPW had achieved a rating of 77 percent on residential streets and 70 percent along high visibility corridors. Compare those numbers to the October 2000 rating when we were only at 66 percent clean -- we are getting better!

The addition of 22 new street sweepers, 27 alley sweepers and 27 litter vacs has greatly improved the productivity, reliability and effectiveness of our street and alley cleaning programs. We hope never again to hear the complaint that residents moved their cars only to find that the street sweepers didn’t come.

To further the reach of our street and alley cleaning work, DPW has forged innovative partnerships with the Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC), the Department of Employment Services (“ARISE” Program -Adults Rising Into Sustainable Employment), the Court Services & Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) and the Department of Corrections (DOC). Specifically,

- The Office of the Corporation Counsel provides community service personnel to support the weekend operations of street and alley cleaning Thursday through Sunday.
- DOES ARISE participants work in the Nuisance Abatement Section and clean nuisance properties, abandoned lots and alleys.

- The Court Services & Offender Supervision Agency provides a minimum of 10 community service personnel on Saturdays to do selective cleaning in high pedestrian areas.
- And, DPW has signed an MOU with the Department of Corrections to provide two crews to support Nuisance Abatement and one crew to support roadside cleaning maintenance. There are seven workers per crew. Without this support, we were only able to clean one property per day. Now, through this program, we are cleaning 3-4 properties each day.

Seasonal Collections

The Department of Public Works operates a 10-week leaf collection program during the fall. In the upcoming leaf season, we plan to implement a 4 day, 10-hour work schedule, to include Saturdays. This new schedule will increase productivity, taking maximum advantage of daylight hours.

And, we will be able to deploy five new, small leaf vacs for tight streets, ordered in FY2001, and six old, larger vacs that are being factory refurbished this summer.

Having two years' experience with the leaf vacs, DPW can now deploy its resources more strategically, spending more time in areas that have the most leaves. Additionally, we can build better, more reliable schedules based on live performance data.

Holiday tree collection pickup is another seasonal program. In FY2001, the program struggled due to a lack of packer trucks. In FY2002, we anticipate

having an adequate number of trucks due to the replacement schedule. We will have 24 trucks – instead of 8 - for holiday tree pickup.

And, this year we plan to again produce a public information brochure outlining the schedule for the leaf collection, as well as Holiday tree pick-up in January. Again, our goal for FY2002 is higher-quality delivery of basic city services. To us that means publishable, reliable scheduled service.

Neighborhood Services Initiative

Our Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Program (SWEET) inspectors are DPW's lead staff to the new Neighborhood Services Initiative. We strongly believe that this initiative, developing cross-agency teams at the neighborhood level to work together to solve problems will go a long way to create the spirit of "cooperation and ownership" at the front line. This new way of delivering services at the neighborhood level will ultimately help in keeping clean areas of the city suffering from persistent problems related to illegal trash dumping, abandoned properties and vehicles, and other forms of urban blight.

We have already seen dramatic results in the pilot areas along Hobart Street in Ward 1 and at Foote Street in Ward 7. The Neighborhood Services Initiative proved to be successful in engaging community support and creating an environment of sustainability within each neighborhood. We anticipate similar successes now that the program has been expanded across the city.

Solid Waste Disposal Operations

Both the Benning Road and the Ft. Totten Transfer facilities need extensive repair and redesign to improve building safety, to clean up health and

environmental liabilities and to replace old equipment. DPW has placed \$5.6 million in the capital budget for design and construction at the Ft. Totten site. This will allow for building and equipment repair and operational improvements at the facility for loading solid waste for transfer and ultimate disposal, currently at the Fairfax County Energy Resource Recovery Facility.

As you are aware, the Solid Waste Transfer Facility Site Selection Advisory Panel forwarded several recommendations to the Mayor and the Council. The panel recommended that the District upgrade the Ft. Totten facility, and construct a second, state-of-the-art transfer station. Engineering consultants to the panel estimate the cost of a new facility at approximately \$8.1 million. In one of the other options considered by the panel, the engineering consultants estimated that a refurbishment of Benning Rd., including demolition of one of the stacks, would be about \$3.9 million.

These panel recommendations are the basis for discussions about solid waste disposal options and we anticipate developing a capital budget item to be included during the consensus budget process.

Parking Services Division

Parking Enforcement

With increased demands for enforcement of residential permit parking (RPP) on nearly 3,500 blocks throughout the District of Columbia and numerous requests for evening and weekend enforcement, the hiring of an additional 44 parking officers, and 3 Supervisors, will enable us to provide enforcement on all RPP

blocks twice each week. We expect to hire, train and equip these additional parking officers by the end of this fiscal year.

The implementation of an automated booting system has also improved our ability to catch ticket scofflaws. Mobile Digital Computers allow booters to immediately verify boot eligible vehicles without having to leaf through pages of paper and verify requests with the Dispatch Office via two-way radio. With these new terminals in each booting vehicle, we will greatly improve the number of boots that each crew will be able to place each day. In addition, we are working with neighborhood organizations to identify additional parking spaces and neighborhood-specific enforcement needs.

PCO Enhancements

But we strongly believe that additional ticket writers are necessary if we are to meet the increasing demands for neighborhood parking enforcement. Therefore, we are working with the Offices of the City Administrator, Tax and Revenue, and Budget and Planning to develop a proposal to hire approximately 138 additional Parking Control Officers, with revenues allocated to DPW to support these PCOs, as well as expanded neighborhood cleaning efforts. These revenues form the basis of our proposal to enhance residential parking enforcement, as well as alley cleaning, and sanitation enforcement.

While this enhancement proposal is not in the printed budget document before us today, we are working hard to include this proposal during the consensus budget process. We look forward to your participation to help make this happen.

Abandoned Auto Removal

We are doing much to improve the effectiveness of our Abandoned Auto & Junk Vehicle Removal program. With the assistance of the Office of the City Administrator and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, we are working on a comprehensive business process improvement project to reduce the time it takes to remove a vehicle from the street.

Implementing these improvements will allow us to more efficiently process all citizen service requests through the Mayor's Call Center; better deploy abandoned and junk vehicle investigators in the field; upgrade technology used to track, store, process, and complete customer service requests, and other improvements that will allow the Abandoned and Junk Vehicle Division to remove vehicles from the streets more rapidly.

Currently, we are removing abandoned automobiles from public space within 10 days on average and on private property within 43 days, on average. We expect to improve this performance with the deployment of 25 new tow cranes into our fleet this year.

Fleet Management

With the hiring of 13 new mechanic positions, we are planning to expand to a 24-hour, 6 days-per-week operation. In the short term, however, we have begun a 16-hour, 6 days-per-week operation, enabling us to perform much of our service during off-time hours when the vehicles are not in use. The staffing increases are possible through a more efficient and effective use of resources. This includes a host of accomplishments, such as replacement of old equipment and the establishment of a new diagnostic triage and quick repair center utilizing state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment in an effort to ensure that equipment is repaired right the first time. Our enhanced fleet management system will aid us in the reduction of parts inventory cost. Additionally, we will be doing more work in-house, thereby, reducing costs to contract maintenance vendors.

This overall effort will enable us to meet our FY2002 performance measure of 98% vehicle availability. On March 19, 2001, we started a comprehensive preventive maintenance program, scheduling an average of 30 vehicles per day. All equipment large and small will be regularly scheduled for preventive maintenance, greatly reducing our costs for major and unscheduled repairs.

We are also developing an intra-net web site that will be available to our customers to provide them with a status of their equipment and preventive maintenance schedule at anytime. Finally in FY2002, \$7.8 million of new capital authority will allow us to continue our vehicle and equipment replacement schedule through the Master Lease program.

Snow

While the snow season is nearly over, we know that, though never really tested, we were more prepared than ever. In FY2002, DPW's base budget will remain

at \$3.2 million, a figure which is based on an average winter's snow costs. HOWEVER, contingencies have been developed in the event that the District suffers a hard winter. Specifically, we have been assured that resources in the Mayor's Reserve Fund will be made available for snow, if necessary, in FY2002, precluding the need for DPW to absorb these costs and thereby impact other service delivery programs.

One significant improvement in our snow program next year will be that the Federal Highway Asset Management program (VMS) will assume all snow responsibility for the 75 miles of federal highways within the city limits. This will allow for a combination of municipal truck redeployment to other routes, as well as drastically reduce our contract support costs.

Let me assure you, Councilmember Schwartz, that thought there is no increase in our base budget for the snow program, we strongly believe that the initiatives I just mentioned will ensure that we have a successful, and "uneventful" snow season.

Customer Service

DPW's Customer Service Team monitors and measures customer service and service delivery improvements. Not surprisingly, DPW receives more service request calls from the City-wide Call Center than nearly any other agency. And responding to these requests in a timely manner is a priority for us.

Improvements in the Call Center have translated into improvements in DPW's scheduled services, hence our overall customer service. We can now more reliably track the progress of service requests routed from the Call Center to our own customer service clearinghouse.

Recently, our customer service unit helped draft a master schedule – our first attempt to corral comprehensive service delivery schedules for all of our core services. In this way, we hope to better manage the public’s expectations for service delivery response times. We can then measure our on-time performance against these schedule standards.

Training

Our commitment to training is exemplified through the Public Works Academy (PWA) that was launched during FY2001. The primary goals of the PWA are to build internal capacity, ensure that employees have the required supervisory and workplace skills, encourage occupational certification in specific areas such as, mechanics, equipment operators and civil engineering technicians, and to increase basic skill levels. Our training program is designed to provide opportunities for personal and professional assessments, research and development and certified career development support.

DDOT

The proposed separation of the District Division of Transportation from the Department of Public Works would create two whole and fully functioning agencies, each able to concentrate on what it does best. The resulting Clean City Agency could then focus its energy and leadership on achieving its mission of a clean city. Likewise, the new Department of Transportation would be able to more keenly focus on its mission, that of stewardship of our infrastructure, and providing for safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and information. Dan will speak more specifically to the details of this proposed separation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let me say that I strongly believe that good government makes itself answerable to the people it serves. Good government demonstrates its accountability by creating results. DPW's proposed FY 2002 budget is our statement of intent – our contract with the residents of Washington, DC. On-time service delivery has become the standard by which we hope to demonstrate our accountability and our progress.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you, Madam Chair, for your ongoing support. I would now like to have Dan Tangherlini talk about the District Division of Transportation, after which we will be happy to entertain your questions.